

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification to read as follows:

Please replace the paragraph at page 10, beginning at line 15 and ending at line 25 with the following amended paragraph:

a focus error detecting optical element having an area quadrisected into first through fourth quadrants from the center of an optical path of the return path light along two division lines extending corresponding to a direction in which the track extends and a direction perpendicular to the extending direction on a plane substantially perpendicular to the optical path of the return path light, for applying the return light passing through adjacent ones of the areas on the same side of the division line with astigmatism in directions rotated by 90° from each other about the optical path, and for separating the return light into at least four corresponding to the areas; and

Please replace the paragraphs at page 13, beginning at line 8 and ending at line 15 with the following amended paragraph:

wherein said cylindrical lenses placed in ~~areas at at least one set of diagonal~~ positions have the optical central axes offset from said division line in parallel therewith.

In a further aspect of the optical pickup device according to the invention, said cylindrical lenses placed in the area at said at least one set of diagonal positions have the optical central axes offset from said division line and on opposite sides to each other.

Please replace the paragraphs at page 14, beginning at line 7 and ending at line 24 with the following amended paragraph:

said optical pickup device further comprising deflecting prism surfaces placed in areas ~~at at least one set of~~ diagonal positions, and tilted with respect to planes perpendicular to the optical paths of the return light in said areas.

In a further aspect of the optical device according to the invention, said deflecting prism surfaces placed in ~~the areas at said at least one set of~~ diagonal positions are tilted at different angles to the places perpendicular to the plane vertical to the optical paths of the return light in said areas.

In a still further aspect of the optical pickup device according to the invention, said deflecting prism surfaces are placed only in ~~the areas at said at least one set of~~ diagonal positions, said cylindrical lenses placed in the areas at the remaining set of diagonal positions have their central axes offset from said division line in parallel therewith and on opposite side to each other.

Please replace the paragraph at page 16, beginning at line 15 and ending at line 25 with the following amended paragraph:

using a focus error detecting optical element having an area quadrisectioned into first through fourth quadrants from the center of an optical path of the return ~~path light~~ along two division lines extending corresponding to a direction in which the track extends and a direction perpendicular to the extending direction on a plane substantially perpendicular to the optical path of the return ~~path light~~, to apply the return light passing through adjacent ones of the areas on the same side of the division line with astigmatism in directions rotated by 90° from each other about

the optical path, and to separate the return path light into at least four corresponding to the areas;
A4
and

**Please replace the paragraph at page 47, beginning at line 16 and ending at page 48,
line 19 with the following amended paragraph:**

A5
While the foregoing embodiments have been described with a lens element produced by combining cylindrical lenses as an example of the focus error detecting optical element, the present invention is not limited to this example, and may use a focus error detecting optical element in another structure, for example, a blazed quadrant hologram element having similar functions. In essence, in an optical pickup having an irradiation optical system for focusing a light beam to form a spot on a track on an information recording surface of an optical recording medium, and a light detection optical system for leading return light reflected back from the spot to a photodetector, and having a focus error detecting optical element having an area quadrisection into first through fourth quadrants from the center of an optical path of the return path light along two division lines extending corresponding to a direction in which the track extends and a direction perpendicular to the extending direction on a plane substantially perpendicular to the optical path of the return path light, for applying the return light passing through adjacent ones of the areas on the same side of the division line with astigmatism in directions rotated by 90° from each other about the optical path, and for separating the return light into at least four corresponding to the areas, and a photodetector having a plurality of spaced light receiving elements for receiving the separated return light, each of the light receiving elements having contour lines corresponding to the division lines on an image plane on which a light beam is shaped into a circular beam in the optical system in which the astigmatism

is applied, and comprised of two light receiving areas divided by a bisect lines extending substantially in parallel with one of the contour lines, a focus error signal may be generated from the sum of differences of signals output from the two light receiving areas.
